



High School Photo



Artist's Age Rendition Sketch

SIU COLD CASE INVESTIGATION- In October 2021, the Mohave County Sheriff's Office Special Investigation Unit (SIU) requested the public's assistance with identifying a previously unidentified female victim from a 1971 Homicide case. On January 23, 1971, the victim was located in the desert area near a dirt road, 2.2 miles east of US Hwy 93 on Hackberry Road. The victim was located in a canvas sack that had been tied at the top with a white cotton rope. The sack was a white cotton, loosely-woven sack, with the words "Deer-Pak Ames Harris Neville Co.," printed in green.

The female victim was described as approximately 35-40 years of age, 5'4", weighing approximately 125-140 pounds, with curly brown hair. She was dressed in a size 14 multi-colored long sleeve blouse, a black long sleeve cardigan sweater, and burnt orange stretch pants with the following tab inside, "Symphony, it's what's happening" size 12. She was wearing a pair of black leather, ankle high boots and bobby sox, possibly white at one time. The victim was not wearing any type of jewelry.

The SIU team reached out to an artist from the Museum of Northern Arizona who made a sketch of what the victim might have looked like based on the features of her skull. (Attached is a age rendition sketch and high school photo of the victim.) The public was requested to contact the Mohave County Sheriff's Office SIU Division if they recognized the person in the sketch or photo with possible identity of this woman, or the incident.

In 2022, MCSO Cold Case investigators partnered with Othram Inc. to determine if advanced DNA testing and Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing could help give insight into the identity of this woman and the circumstances surrounding her untimely death. MCSO committed \$1000 to the cause and asked for assistance from the community to give her justice and closure to her family who has been looking for her. Othram, Inc. set up a DNA Solves fund to raise the

remaining \$6,500 to have her DNA tested. The hope was that the community would open its heart and help to finally give her a name. The "Dear Gladys" DNASolves page was advertised and the community opened its heart, funding the case in only 5 days. The testing process began in late 2022.

On January 23, 2023, the victim found her voice. Through the use of Forensic Genetic Genealogy, the victim has been identified as **Colleen Audrey Rice**. DNA testing of a relative confirmed this after countless hours of investigation into her family tree and contact with distant family relatives.

Colleen Audrey Rice was born on 3-17-31 in Portsmouth, Ohio, the daughter of James C. Rice and Flossie Truitt. She went to Portsmouth High School, from which an early photo of her was obtained. She married William Davis in 1946 in Ohio. She was estranged from her family, so little is known of her life or how she came to be in Arizona. It is unknown if she had children as no records could be found. The investigation is ongoing into the suspect and/or suspects responsible for her death. The MCSO continues to seek the public's assistance with providing any information they may have on the later years of the victim's life.

Anyone who had information regarding Colleen Audrey Rice or the incident was encouraged to contact the Mohave County Sheriff's Office SIU at 928-753-0753 ext. 4408 or call the toll free number at 1-800-522-4312 and reference DR# 71-0383.